

# FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125



Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
0054000928	Boston N.		664

Town Lexington

Place (*neighborhood or village*)

Address 455 Lowell St.

Historic Name Benjamin Wyman/S.H. Jones/Porter Farm

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction 1821

Source Lexington Valuation lists

Style/Form Federal (altered)

Architect/Builder

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite (front), Concrete Block (back)

Wall/Trim Vinyl Siding

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures Attached garage

Major Alterations (*with dates*)

Roofline altered and rear extended (1980s?)

Condition Fair

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 2.6 A.

Setting At edge of a large open field very close to a major street with constant traffic lined with 20th-century houses

Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*) February 1998

*Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.*

## BUILDING FORM

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

☐ see continuation sheet

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

455 Lowell St. is one of the very few Federal houses remaining on Lowell St., formerly the Middlesex Turnpike. Recent alterations have, however, destroyed its architectural integrity. The original house is rectangular, two stories, five-by-two bays, and side-gabled with an exterior chimney. It is set on a granite foundation, sided with vinyl siding, and roofed with asphalt shingles. Relatively recently the roof line has been raised in both front and back, the rear extended on a concrete block foundation, and the house sided. There is an attached one-car garage at the east end.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

☐ see continuation sheet

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

This house was built in 1821 by Benjamin Wyman (1774–1849), who had apparently inherited the 33 acres associated with it from his wife, Lucy Gardner. The date of construction is determined by the increase in Benjamin's real estate valuation from \$100 in 1819, the year he was first listed, to \$500 in 1821 (the 1820 list is missing). Benjamin had no children and after his death the property was inherited by his brother Francis, who in 1866 sold it, described as the "homestead of Benjamin Wyman," to a Samuel H. Jones. Jones owned the property for 20 years and then, known as the "S.H. Jones Farm," it was acquired in 1889 by Robert and Alexander Porter. The Porters had been born in Ireland and emigrated to the U.S. in 1882. In 1893 their farm was the object of a newspaper story when a former employee tried to commit suicide, reportedly over an infatuation with a female employee on the farm. Alexander Porter sold out to Robert in 1894 and the latter then operated what was called a market garden (truck farm), dairy, piggery, and apple and pear orchard. A 1923 photograph shows the house with a hip roof, two rear chimneys, and many outbuildings; the alteration in the roof line and rear extension are reportedly fairly recent. In 1976 the town took 16.8 acres by eminent domain for what is now the Shaker Glen conservation land.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

☐ see continuation sheet

Hudson, Charles. *History of the Town of Lexington*. Revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913. 2: 783.

*Lexington Minute-man*, 15 December 1893.

Lexington Valuation Lists. 1806–1826.

Middlesex Registry of Deeds. Deeds. 965: 413; 1740: 142; 1908: 168; 2325: 298.

Sileo, Thomas P. Sileo. *Historical Guide to Open Space in Lexington*. Lexington, Mass.: Thomas P. Sileo, 1995. 235–37.

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*